



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance

Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)
Cape Cod and The Islands ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes

Date: January 27, 2017
Time: 10 a.m.
Place: Hyannis Transitional Assistance Office
181 North Street
Hyannis, MA 02601

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. by Paula George, Board Chair.

Attendance was taken. A quorum was present.

Members of Board Present:

Yvonne Avant, Deb'orah Battles, Jill Brookshire, Martha Burzycki, Beverly Costa-Ciavola, Arlene Crosby, Maggie Flanagan, Paula George, Janice Nelson, Brenda Swain, Katherine Wibby.

Members of Board Absent:

Betty Burton, Betsy Fontes, Beth Gaffney, Jannelle Klun, Sarah Kuh, Valerie Pereira-Brown, Eva Souza.

Members of DTA Present:

Cynthia Arroyo, Wendy Buttrick, Peter Danzell.

Members of the Public Present:

Esther Laiacona

Summary of discussions held on each topic on the agenda:

Welcome: Paula George, Chair

- Approval of 9-30-16 Meeting Minutes
 - The meeting minutes were approved. Brenda Swain motioned approval they passed unanimously.
 - The Chair asked for volunteers to fill the role of Secretary for the DTA Advisory Board, Brenda Swain volunteered and was unanimously approved.

Guest Speaker: Promoting SNAP Education:

Cynthia Arroyo, SNAP – Education Program Coordinator, SNAP Program Development & Contract Management, DTA provided the following information:

- Several brochures, flyers and materials were distributed and are attached for the file.
- Four vendors are partnering with DTA in the delivery of the SNAP-Ed workshops
- Cynthia asked for ideas on increasing participation as attendance is low. A lively discussion ensued. Upcoming classes were listed and members were encouraged to share with constituents.
- Contact information for Cynthia is also attached.

Guest Speaker: Department of Revenue: Stuart H. Skerker, CSE DTA Liaison and Special Projects Coordinator

- Stuart works with DOR as a Regional Office Liaison regarding child support eligibility to create smooth transitions for DTA clients to child support. He emphasized how DOR and DTA are partners and that both work to ensure income is generated for the client and in turn for the State of MA.
- Goal is to try to get the noncustodial parent to financially support the family through DTA. Genetic markers are utilized to establish parentage.
- In cases of domestic violence there is flexibility and exceptions are made to avoid risk. In cases of incarceration child support is suspended.
- Maggie raised the suggestion that a parent leaving DTA due to recovery of child support or other situations that make them ineligible, it is critical that they be informed about the child care voucher system while they can still have access. She suggests a letter be generated to this effect.
- A new computer system will be on-line in May 2017 and Stuart may return to talk about this system.
- Stuart invited attendees to call him directly with questions or concerns. (numbers attached)
- Many forms and pamphlets on applying for child support were shared and are attached.

DTA Director Updates:

Peter Danzell, Hyannis TAO Director provided the following updates:

Local TAO Updates:

- Staffing Caseloads:
 - TAFDC: 584 (September) to 614 for January – 5% increase
Avg. per worker is
 - EAEDC – 286 (September) to 302 for January – 6% increase
Avg. per worker is 60.
 - Total Cases per worker on avg. is 183.

- Staffing On Site:
 - 33 total staff for Hyannis TAO

Breakdown:

Managers: 2

Supervisors: 7

SNAP staff: 14, includes 1 new hire on 10/31.

Clerical: 4

Cash Staff: 5

FEW: 1, started officially 11/21 - Zaira Rideout

New Hires: Requested for a posting for an additional Cash Worker to replace Zaira – Still Pending.

DTA – Statewide Updates (Change in Program and/or Business Process):

- DTA Connect program started at the end of August. As of this week, phase 2 of DTA Connect has started with the added features of uploading and submission of important documents; ability to update contact information; and requesting an income verification letter. With these additional features added this should continue to reduce calls to our DTA Assistance line and traffic coming into our DTA offices.
- Reminders from prior meeting on Phase 1 setup & features:
 - Clients can now manage their benefits on a smart phone by just downloading the App to their mobile device. To login, you just enter your SSN number and year of birth.
 - Features include reviewing your benefit dates and amounts (from previous day) and balances. See whether your benefits are active or closed.
 - Displays information on your case like address, phone number, email address, are you allowed email notifications....
 - Displays alerts on when your recertification period ends, scheduled appts coming up with dates/times.
- Additional Updates:

1.) Metal detectors and X-ray machines are now installed and working well. Hyannis now has an additional ISA Officer to assist with the screening process. Almost all 23 DTA offices statewide have the metal screening now in place.

2.) Printer/Scanner machine is now in place as of Tuesday in the lobby of our clients. Clients can now scan in their documents to attach to their cases within 24 to 48 hours. This option is additional to mailing, faxing and now using a Smart

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Board Member Agency Updates:

- Deferred until next meeting?

Suggestions for Agenda Topics for Next Meeting:

- A presentation by St. Josheph's House as a transition has been made from Noah Shelter.
- Information on the Ticket to Work program was also requested.

Open Discussion:

- Two flyers were circulated by committee members but there was not time for discussion. Those flyers are attached.

Documents used at meeting:

- Sign-in Sheet
- Agenda
- 9-30-2016 Meeting Minutes
- Brochures attached

Decisions made or actions taken:

- Next Meeting DTA Advisory Board: March 31, 2017 @ 10 a.m.

Record of any votes:

- 09-30-2016 Meeting Minutes – Approved
- Brenda Swain elected as Secretary - Approved

The meeting was adjourned at: 11:40 a.m.